

Remarks:

This amendment is submitted in an earnest effort to advance this case to issue without delay. The examiner has indicated that the case contains allowable subject matter.

The claims have been amended to correct a minor error in claim 8. There is no change in the scope of this claim.

Entry of this amendment after final action is in order because it introduces no new issues or field of search and because it places the case in better condition for appeal.

Independent claim 1 and dependent claims 2 and 3 have been rejected under §103 on the combination of US 5,254,222 of Mazzini and US 3,197,821 of Bright, and US. This combination plus US 4,028,193 of Nagayoshi is also applied against dependent claim 13.

Claim 1 is aimed at a comb structure that is specifically adapted to fit the coke-oven door frame. The Webster's Unabridged definition of "comb" is "an instrument consisting of a thin strip with a row of teeth." This is not what is seen in Mazzini, Bright, or Nagayoshi.

More particularly in Nagayoshi the spacing of the U-shaped slots 15 and in Mazzini of the cutouts 32 is about 1 meter apart, hardly allowing this structure to flex to conform to the door frame. There is only some flexibility every meter or so, which is hardly going to do the job. As stated in column 1, lines 43ff of Nagayoshi: "The knife edge is formed at suitable intervals with U-shaped slots on the base plate side to provide it with suitable flexibility." This means that there is only flexibility every meter or so.

With the comb-like seal strip according to the invention there is much, much greater flexibility. Being able to deform somewhat at intervals of 1 meter or more will not allow the seal to conform to the shape of a thermally deformed coke-oven door.

Going further, there is nothing in the references that meets the above-cited dictionary definition of a "comb." In fact none of the references uses the word "comb," so that forming the coke-oven door seal as a comb is neither obvious nor suggested. Considering the structure, for instance, of Nagayoshi to be a "comb" is making an interpretation that is nowhere in this or any of the other cited references. A "comb" with 1-meter wide "teeth" is not plausible.

For these reasons all the claims in the case are in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

If only minor problems that could be corrected by means of a telephone conference stand in the way of allowance of this case, the examiner is invited to call the undersigned to make the necessary corrections.

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Enclosure:

None.